

## ***Language Testing* – Special Issue Instructions for Guest Editors**

This document is for special issue editors of *Language Testing*. Once selected as special issue editor, to help begin the process of your special issue, we have created the following instructions. Once you have read through these instructions, please let SAGE or the *Language Testing* editors know if you have any further questions about how to proceed, and please contact SAGE or the *Language Testing* editors with any questions that arise throughout the process.

### ***General instructions***

As special issue editors you will be responsible for managing the entire production of one issue of the journal. This will include commissioning papers for your issue, overseeing the internal and external review processes, checking final proofs, and ensuring that a full set of manuscripts has been submitted in time for production prior to publication in July 2020. During this time you will liaise with the journal editors (Luke Harding and Paula Winke). You will also liaise with our editorial assistant, John Dylan Burton (who begins in this role May 2019).

### ***Key questions***

#### **How many papers should we include?**

In planning the special issue, please aim for 1 introductory editorial in addition to 5-7 contributed papers. Special issues often have at least one closing post-script or discussion paper which can be useful, but the decision on whether to include this will be up to you. It is probably better to aim for 7 papers from the outset so that you have a safety net in the event that an author is unable to complete a paper according to the schedule or some papers don't make it through the review process. Both of these unfortunate circumstances can arise in the process. The published page length of the special issues should be approximately 140 pages.

#### **How long should each paper be?**

All submissions should follow normal guidelines: "Original submissions should be 8,000 words maximum in length, inclusive of Notes, MS Word formatted Figures or Tables, and References. The abstract does not count toward the 8,000-word limit." We can allow some more flexibility at the revision stage to allow the authors to respond to reviewers' requests for additional information, but initial submissions should not exceed the 8000 word limit. Special issue editorials and post-scripts are normally less than 4000 words.

#### **How will the review process work?**

The following steps are taken to ensure that the review process is both expedient and thorough:

- (1) Special issue editors are invited to be guest editors within the ScholarOne Manuscript system for *Language Testing*. An initial, internal review of the manuscripts is undertaken by the special issue (SI) editors to help the authors improve the papers as much as possible, giving them the best chance of a successful external review. The SI editors need to decide whether the paper has materialized in a way that makes it still relevant to the special issue,

and whether it is of high enough quality to send out for review. The SI editors may also want to request a shift in emphasis in view of the other papers in the issue. If special issue editors are submitting full papers themselves, the *Language Testing* Editors will handle the review.

(2) An external review requires at least two double-blind external reviews for each paper. The SI editors send papers out to external reviewers through the ScholarOne Manuscript system for *Language Testing*. It is advisable to line up commitments from at least some reviewers for the special issue prior to making the requests. The SI editors guide the papers through the review process, communicating with reviewers and authors, and then evaluating the authors' revisions. Throughout this process the SI editors are welcome to communicate with the *Language Testing* editors for advice and assistance.

(3) The complete special issue is reviewed by the *Language Testing* editors. Editors will communicate with SI editors about any issues and requests for revisions that they have based on this review. This external view of the whole project can raise issues that then needs to be resolved relatively quickly.

### What are the deadlines in the process?

Starting in 2021, the special issue is scheduled for issue 1 of the journal (the January issue). For publication in January 2021, the SI editors will need to submit the complete manuscript (i.e., all final accepted versions of manuscripts) by **July 31, 2020**.

The following outlines the deadlines that should be observed to manage the process:

Month	Guest editors' tasks
June 2019	Notify selected authors that special issue has been approved and inform them of the deadline for full article submission
June 2019	Release call for papers (open call) – provide deadline for submission of abstracts to consider for selection (deadline should be a date in July)
July 2019	Invite successful entrants of open call and inform them of the deadline for full article submission
November 2019	Authors' first submission of full manuscripts to online system
December 2019	Review process (1): Special issue editors read submissions and provide feedback
January 2020	Authors submit revised manuscripts
February 2020	Review process (2): Special issue editors check revised papers for readiness and send them out to external reviewers (or return to authors for additional revision, as needed)
March 2020	External reviewers' feedback due (final date)
April 2020	Authors revise manuscripts in response to external reviewers' comments

May 2020	Special issue editors review revised manuscript or send for second round of external review (if needed)
June 2020	External reviewers' feedback due (final date)
July 2020	Authors make final revisions, and complete set of manuscripts sent to LT editors (by <b>July 31, 2020</b> ) for final editorial review
August 2020	Additional time to allow for further review, delays, etc.
September 2020	All approved manuscripts marked as "accept" in online system and articles move to production.

Questions may be posed to Luke Harding and Paula Winke, Editors, *Language Testing*  
E-mail: [ltassist@msu.edu](mailto:ltassist@msu.edu)